

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 1 as follows:

The drill floor further carries drawworks 32 associated with the drilling hoist 12. A drillers' cabin ~~33~~ and a cabin 34 for the operator of the preparation hoist and other devices ~~are~~ may also be placed on the drill floor. It should be understood that although one configuration of these devices is shown in FIG. 1 that any functional arrangement of these elements may be utilized in the offline standbuilding system of the current invention.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 18 as follows:

As shown in FIGs. 4, the loading and preparation tube handling and transporting mechanism 22 is aligned such that the stroke and travel of the device ~~38~~ allows for the movement of tubulars between the V-door and the preparation opening. It should be understood, however, that other suitable arrangements of the load and preparation pipehandling and transporting mechanism may be used. For example, as the figures also show, the gripping device may also be used to hoist and lift a tubular in a vertical direction. In another embodiment of the invention the load and preparation pipehandling and transporting mechanism may also provide a hoist mechanism designed to lift a tubular from off the drill floor 11, such as from a catwalk 11a via a tubular ramp 11b (such as that shown in FIG. 5), to within the range of the stroke and travel of the gripping device 24. As shown in FIG. 5, in one preferred embodiment the hoist is

designed to extend outward off the drill platform 11 over the ramp 11b such that tubulars may be raised straight from an off-platform catwalk 11a to the outer reach of the transporting mechanism 22. Such a design prevents the normal swing associated with the loading and unloading of pipe from off the drill platform 11.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 19 as follows:

As shown in detail in FIG. 3, in one embodiment the storage pipehandling device 29 generally comprises an extendable gripping arm 31 having a gripper device 39 on its end mounted to a rotary platform 40 in the setback area within the derrick structure between the storage areas 26 and 27. The storage pipehandling device 29 provides generally for the movement of tubulars between the well center or stand building location to the setback position and back again. As shown, the gripping device 39 on the arm 31 may be extended a predefined distance out from the vertical shaft rotary platform 40. As the gripping device 39 may extend and swing around the axis of the storage pipehandling mechanism as the rotary platform 40 is rotated, the gripping device 39 may be moved within a circle 41 of defined outer radius which is indicated by a dot-and-dash line in FIG. 3. As shown in FIGs. 4, the storage pipehandling and transporting mechanism 29 is aligned such that the stroke and travel of the device [[41]] allows for the movement of tubulars between the storage areas 26 and 27, the preparation opening 21, and the drilling opening 18. It should be understood, however, that other suitable designs and arrangements of the storage pipehandling and transporting mechanism may be used such that

the functionality to manipulate and transport tubulars between at least one preparation opening, a storage area, and a drilling opening are retained.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 26 as follows:

A first single tubular body section, such as a drill tube section 46a, is loaded in from outside the derrick 10 from an off floor catwalk 11a up a tubular ramp 11b through the V-door 25 (FIG. 6), swiveled into position over the preparation opening (FIG. 7), and lowered into the preparation opening 21 (FIG. 8) by the hoist of the load and preparation pipehandling device 22. In this embodiment the hoist may take many forms. For example, the hoist could be an independent hoist device 51 which could be used only to bring the tubular through the V-door to the load and preparation pipehandling device. However, preferably the hoisting mechanism of the load and preparation pipehandling device itself is designed such that when lowered the gripper itself can be lowered onto the ramp and this gripper hoist can be used to first lift the single tubular body section from outside of the drilling area up a tubular ramp 11b through the V-door to the main body of the pipehandling device 22, as described above in FIG. 5. Subsequently, slips are set, the load and preparation pipehandling device 22 released, and a second single tubular body section 46b or tubular brought in through the V-door 25 in a similar manner. The load and preparation pipehandling device 22 either places this second single tubular 46b into a second adjacent preparation opening 47, as shown in FIG. 9, or suspends this second single tubular 46b above and adjacent to the first one 46a in the preparation

Appln No. 10/734,923

Reply to Office action of October 8, 2004

opening, while the two are being assembled by either a conventional tubular torquing device, such as an iron roughneck 48 or by a tubular torquing device mounted on the load and preparation pipehandling device 22 (not shown). It should be understood that although the tubular torquing device 48 shown in FIG. 9 and discussed above is designed to rotate into and out of position that other suitable designs may be used, such as a tubular torquing device with a linear travel aligned along a path such that it may reach both preparation opening 21 and drill opening 18, or a combination device having both rotatable and linear travel.